

Dukakis's tank ride and his lame, emotionless answer to Bernard Shaw's question about how he would respond if someone raped and murdered Kitty Dukakis.

We've come a long way from that, with the four nominees for president and vice president arguing about such genuinely important topics as defense, education, Social Security and health care.

But before we get too giddy in celebrating our good fortune, let it be noted that historians are almost certain to remark on the purposeful myopia of the candidates in this first election of the new millennium, their deliberate refusal to acknowledge and discuss one of the biggest realities of our national life: The glorious federal budget surpluses they are happily parceling out for their favorite programs and tax cuts are a short-term phenomenon, soon to be followed by crippling deficits, unless we make some hard choices in the next few years.

In this respect, the 2000 campaign is reminiscent of 1988—but worse. In that year, Dukakis and the elder Bush avoided discussing the savings and that year, Dukakis and the elder Bush avoided discussing the savings and loan crisis both of them knew was around the corner. The reason: There were no easy answers, just bad news and an expensive bailout in store.

What we now confront is much, much bigger than the savings and loan bailout. Its dimensions were outlined last week in a report from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO)—a report that did not make the front page of any of the papers I read and that was ignored by most of the TV news shows.

Here's what it said: Assuming that the new president uses the expected surplus in Social Security of \$2.4 trillion over the next 10 years to pay down the national debt, as Gore and Bush say they will do, the government may be able to balance its books until about 2020.

But then the retirement and health care costs of the huge baby boom generation and the shrinkage in the number of Americans working and paying taxes will once again create a serious imbalance—and push us back into debt.

In the estimate of the CBO, "If the nation's leaders do not change current policies to eliminate that imbalance, federal deficits are likely to reappear and eventually drive federal debt to unsustainable levels." A chart accompanying the report shows the public debt in 2040 rising to 60 percent of the estimated size of that year's economy—creating a burden on the next generation of Americans half again as large as the accumulated debt of the past is on us.

As The Post's Glenn Kessler noted in his news story, "The report underscores how campaign rhetoric has become increasingly separated from the budget reality that will face the next president." While Bush pushes his trillion-dollar tax cut and tries to keep up with Gore's promises of new prescription drug benefits, 100,000 teachers and 50,000 cops, neither one is preparing the public for the steps that are needed to rein in runaway health care costs—the largest single force driving us back into deficits.

By 2040, according to the best available data, the percentage of Americans over 65 will rise from 13 percent to almost 21 percent. The share of working-age Americans, between 20 and 64, will decline by 3 points of slightly over 55 percent. The ratio of workers to retirees will drop from almost 5 to 1 down to less than 3 to 1. Unless we begin now to reorganize our dysfunctional health care system and take steps to rationalize provisions for retirement income, the demographic wave will sink us.

Someone has to force the candidates to confront that reality.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, in accordance with 22 U.S.C. 1928a-1928d, as amended appoints the following Senators as members of the Senate Delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly during the Second Session of the 106th Congress, to be held in Berlin, Germany, November 17-22, 2000: The Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY; the Senator from Arkansas, Mr. HUTCHINSON; the Senator from Maryland, Mr. SARBANES, and the Senator from Maryland, Ms. MIKULSKI.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT OF 2000

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of H.R. 4259, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4259) to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the National Museum of the American Indian of the Smithsonian Institution, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read the third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 4259) was read the third time and passed.

EXPORT ADMINISTRATION MODIFICATION AND CLARIFICATION ACT OF 2000

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Banking Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 5239 and the Senate then proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 5239) to provide for increased penalties for violations of the Export Administration Act of 1979, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

AMENDMENT NO. 4305

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, Senators GRAMM and ENZI have an amendment at the desk, and I ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Virginia [Mr. WARNER], for Mr. GRAMM, for himself and Mr. ENZI, proposes an amendment numbered 4305.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide for a simple one-year extension of the Export Administration Act of 1979)

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

Section 20 of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. App. 2419) is amended by striking "August 20, 1994" and inserting in lieu thereof "August 20, 2001".

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read the third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 4305) was agreed to.

The bill (H.R. 5239), as amended, was read the third time and passed.

PROVIDING FOR DISPOSITION AND ARCHIVING OF RECORDS OF JOINT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES ON INAUGURAL CEREMONIES

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Con. Res. 148, submitted earlier today by Senator MCCONNELL.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 148) to provide for the disposition and archiving of the records, files, documents, and other materials of Joint Congressional Committees on inaugural ceremonies.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, earlier this year the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies held an organizational meeting to officially begin preparations for the next Presidential Inauguration hosted by Congress to be held on Saturday, January 20, 2001.

Next year marks more historic milestones as it will be the 200th anniversary of the first Presidential Inauguration in our Nation's Capital, the first Presidential Inauguration of the 21st Century, and, not least of all, the first inauguration of the new millennium. 2001 also marks the 100th birthday of the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies, an entity which I am greatly honored to serve as Chairman.